

To: Mayor and City Council
Cc: John Szerlag, City Manager
Lori Grigg Bluhm, City Attorney
Mark Miller, SEMCOG alternate delegate

From: Robin Beltramini, Council Member, SEMCOG delegate

Subject: SEMCOG General Assembly Meeting, March 21, 2002
MSU Management Center, Troy MI

Date: March 27, 2002

The afternoon began with a choice of two informational sessions. One was the report of the Detroit Area Study (copy of presentation enclosed). The second offering was an overview of SEMCOG structure and services. The listing of potential membership benefits includes: publications; information requests; maps/GIS assistance; aerial photographs; technical assistance; specialized seminars; executive committee membership; advisory council membership; projects in the TIP; and grants. Troy avails itself of all SEMCOG opportunities, except aerial photographs and executive committee membership (see report from County caucus, Feb. 28, 2002). I also learned that, of our bordering communities, Auburn Hills, Birmingham, Bloomfield Hills, Bloomfield Twp., Madison Heights, and Rochester Hills are SEMCOG members and Clawson, Royal Oak, and Sterling Heights are not.

General Assembly Meeting:

The meeting began promptly at 4:30 p.m. with roll call by Durene Brown, SEMCOG Membership Manager, and a brief "Welcome to Troy" by myself. Public Comment followed. During this portion of the meeting Jim Bush, private citizen, activist, who opposes urban sprawl style development, circulated an informational sheet (copy enclosed). Mr. Bush's comments centered on the continuing escalation of Michigan and U.S. oil consumption, Bush Administration drilling policies, and the desire for a summit focused on transportation that is not auto-dependent.

Minutes: Minutes of October 25, 2001 General Assembly were approved as written. Executive Committee meeting minutes of December 7, 2001 and January 25, 2002 were received.

Report of Finance and Budget Committee: The General Assembly adopted the FY 2002-2003 Annual Budget and Work Program. It specifically approves revenues and expenditures of \$10.4 million. Also, passed was the membership fees schedule. Troy's fee will be \$11,630 beginning January 2003, up from \$11,440 in 2002. The increase is a reflection of the area consumer price index (Detroit-Ann Arbor-Flint area, October 2000-October 2001) of 1.7% rounded to the nearest \$10. The \$10.4 million budget includes a \$251,000 component of the supplies and services budget, or 14% of the \$1,824,000 budgeted for supplies, equipment, and specialized services, that could be granted to and provided by Minority and Women Disadvantage Business Enterprises.

Report of Transportation Advisory Council: The General Assembly made \$55.6 million in amendments to the 2025 Regional Transportation Plan for Southeast Michigan (RTP). Amending the seven projects (study for M-53 from 12 to 14 Mi; Wagner Rd. from Liberty to Jackson; I-94 at Schaefer; US-24 from Ford to Joy, 2 projects; Canada-US-Ontario-Michigan Border Transportation Partnership Study; MDOT Regional study with various improvements) will allow federal dollars to flow to the projects and allow them to be programmed into the TIP. We also adopted a regional strategy for ITS projects in Southeast Michigan. Implementation will be with federal funds.

Goals for the RTP were adopted as follows:

1. Enhance accessibility and mobility for all people
2. Enhance accessibility and mobility for freight while maintaining community integrity.

3. Strategically improve the transportation infrastructure to enhance community and economic vitality.
4. Promote a safe and secure transportation system.
5. Protect the environment, both natural and built.

Each has a series of Objectives attached.

Report from the Executive Director:

Paul Tait brought the assembly up to date on the financing proposals for the RTP and Speedlink. Taxing options are still being reviewed: payroll, personal income, sales tax on services, gas, property tax increases or reallocations. One further notion is a bundling of the RTP funding into a generalized infrastructure tax used to finance transit, roads, and sewer costs. There is no current provision or ability to do a local fund match or have operating funds for the transit vision. Financing and Governance of the implemented plan are still sticking points, but the Legislature is discussing it.

Report of the Chairperson:

A nominating committee was formed. They will meet in May to slate 2002-2003 SEMCOG officers. All chair and vice chair nominees will be taken from the Executive Committee, by rule. If anyone is interested in serving on an advisory council, contact Durene Brown.

Kwame M. Kilpatrick, Mayor, City of Detroit, arrived to address the assembly. The Mayor shared his continuing vision for Detroit based in three areas:

- Kids—Starts with the “Mayor’s Time” after school program; crime prevention and decreasing juvenile delinquency; crime reduction training; and core neighborhood development.
- Cops—Detroit needs to be declared a “safe” city for an effective economic turn-around; Detroit Police Dept. needs new headquarters, not only for the symbolic gesture a clean, modern building will present, but also for the technology necessary to fight and track crime in today’s world.
- Clean—10 sections of the city have been identified to be physically cleaned; vacant and dangerous buildings, particularly those near schools, are being torn down. (City funding has been exhausted. Looking for private investment to continue the demolition.)

The Mayor also stressed some necessities for economic and social advancement:

- Transit Legislation—needs to pass to set up the authority; only way to get full buy-in from the whole region; region is losing conventions, meetings, groups because of a lack of public transit. Detroit cannot be a global destination without public transit.
- Urban sprawl has taxed *all* infrastructure. “We must turn the page.” The Mayor promotes moving on to new ideas and methods rather than tweaking what we have.

The meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m. to a networking opportunity.